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## COLLECTION OF FOLK-LORE IN FINLAND.

THE Literary Society of Finland (*Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura*), which has from its foundation been an important element in the national life, is by far the most active, as it is the oldest, society of folk-lore in the world. It was established in 1831, in order to gather up oral material as well as manuscripts relating to the archæology and linguistics of the race. It gave pecuniary assistance to the famous Lönnrot, and to Castren; in 1859, as the result of Lönnrot's work, appeared the celebrated Kalevala. In 1850, the reaction in Europe affected the activity of the society, which could not even obtain permission to publish the translation of a Latin work. From 1866 to 1880, the society printed the Swedish-Finnish dictionary of Lönnrot, at an expense of more than \$15,000. In 1891 it printed *Kalevalan esityöt* (works preparatory for the study of the Kalevala), giving the original popular songs, of which Lönnrot made the redaction which has become so well-known.

The various pieces of folk-lore now in manuscript in the library of the society amount to more than 110,000 numbers. This immense mass of material is divided by Kaarle Krohn, in a statement of the career of the society, into (1) songs, epic and lyric; (2) superstitions; (3) games; (4) tales; (5) proverbs; (6) riddles. The first interest naturally belongs to the national epic. Much of the material of this is borrowed, the songs have undergone a process of collation, through which they have been grouped into an epos; the questions which arise, as to how much of the matter is genuinely national in character, and in what manner borrowing has taken place from Swedes and Russians, will not be settled until time and opportunity are given for a full examination. The lyric poetry is partly old and local, partly borrowed from neighboring races. A selection of the remarkable magical songs has recently been translated by the Hon. J. Abercromby, and printed in "Folk-Lore." In 1891 M. Waronen published a collection of superstitions relative to the hunt. In regard to superstitions in general, also, as would naturally be expected, the influence of Western Europe is marked. Comparative studies on Finnish Folk-Tales have been by Kaarle Krohn, appearing in "Suomi," the journal of the society. Proverbs form forty per cent. of the collections; a book of Finnish proverbs, by J. Judén, appearing in 1816, was the first publication on Finnish folk-lore. Riddles number about 10,000; a revised collection is soon to appear.

Take it all together, one cannot read such a statement without a certain degree of envy as well as of admiration.